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S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE
HIS EXCELLENCY

THE
LORD LIEUTENANT

AND THE

Two Houses of PARLIAMENT.

IN

CHRIST'S-CHURCH, DUBLIN:

When THEY First Met there together.

On Sunday, October 16. 1692.

By JOHN Lord Archbishop of TUAM.

Published by His EXCELLENCY's Special Command.

DUBLIN:

Printed by Joseph Ray on College Green, for William Norman
Bookseller in Dames Street. 1692.

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OF 211.

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JUDG. XVII. 6.

In those Days, there was no King in Israel; but every Man did that which was Right in his own Eyes.



THE Book of *Judges* contains Memorials of the State and People of the Jews, from the Death of *Joshua* to the Time that *Eli* Judged *Israel*; with whose Government the first Book of *Samuel* begins, and carries on their History. We have here an Account of many Vicissitudes of their Government; and of many very Remarkable Passages concerning the Manners and Behaviour, the Sufferings and Deliverances of that Stubborn and Apostatizing People: From the Day that they left *Egypt*, they were on every Turn, murmuring against *Moses* their Deliverer; all their Grievances are put to his Account: If they at any Time want Flesh, or Bread, or Water, they immediately charge him with Mismanagement, and wish they had still continu'd Slaves, so they might have eaten Onions, and Garlick, and Flesh in *Egypt*: So that God was forc'd often to stop their Mouths by Miracles, and sometimes to vindicate the Authority of His *Servant*, by extraordinary Judgments on those that *Rebell'd* against it: So difficult a thing it was, to keep them to their Duty, even when *Moses* was King in *Jeshurun*, and was Conducting them from Bondage into Liber-

ty. But they had not long past over *Jordan*, and Enjoy'd Rest from their Enemies, before they fell to their old Trade. They serv'd the Lord all the Days of *Jessua*, and of the Elders that out lived him; but these were scarce Cold in their Graves, and but just gather'd to their Fathers, when there arose another Generation, which knew not the Lord, but did evil in his sight, and follow'd other Gods; insomuch, that his Anger often waxed hot, that they could not stand against their Enemies. Nevertheless, upon their Repentance, God still rais'd them up *Judges*, and Delivered them all the days of the *Judge*. But as soon as he died, they again corrupted themselves, more than their Fathers, and ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

This is the Account we have of them, in the Second Chapter, which describes the Heads and Contents of the Book following: which is fill'd with little else but such like various Turns of their Affairs, of their Sins and their Punishments, and of their Repentance and Deliverance.

The Text is an Historical Remark, which the Collector of these Passages makes, of a certain *Inter-Regnum*, or Intercision in their Civil Government, and of the Consequences that Naturally and Usually attend such a State and Frame of Things. And accordingly, I shall take an Occasion to offer to your Consideration the great Misery of a People, when they are without Restraint from Civil Government: Which I shall with all plainness endeavour to lay before you, from two Heads of Discourse, which are obvious in the Text.

I. Here is a Vacancy in the Throne; *In these Days there was no King in Israel.*

II. A General Debauchery, or Universal Depravation of Manners; *Every Man did that which was Right in his own Eyes.*

When

When we have viewed and considered these Particulars, I shall in a few Practical Inferences bring them home to our own Doors, and there leave their Application.

I. Here is a Vacancy in the Throne: *There was in those Days no King in Israel.*

By the Word *King* in this Text, we are not, I conceive, to understand that Form of Government only which we call a Monarchy, but Civil Government in general; If the Text did intend that Form Precisely and Exclusively of all others, it would, I confess, be the strongest Argument of the Excellency and Usefulness thereof, and a Reflection upon all other Models, as being less sufficient for their Ends. We might from such an Exposition infer, That the *Monarchical* Government is the most Powerful and Effectual Restraint to the Passions and Vices of Men. As if we shou'd say, There were other Governours, the standing Council of the Great *Sanhedrim*, and other Inferiour *Judicatories*; but these could not check the Insolencies of Men, nor stop the Course of Impiety or Violence; these could not hinder, or durst not punish the Riots and Unlawful Assemblies of the Wicked and Unruly Sorts of *Belial*. (There was no *King*) and therefore every Man did as he pleas'd, as if no Lord were over them.

But I conceive such an Exposition is too narrow, and not altogether true: For, as *Solomon* observes, *Prov XXX. 27. The Locusts who have no King, yet go forth all of them by Bands.* So, other Constitutions of Government may have Unity, and Order, and Strength, to enforce their respective Laws; and the Finger of their *Discipline* is found sometimes to be heavier than the Loins of *Monarchy*; the Generosity and Clemency of Kings (at least of some Kings) Dispensing in some matters with a rigid Conformity to their Laws; while others who affect a show of more Liberty, prove generally more severe Exactors of Obedience. And therefore, by *No King in Israel*, I am content you may understand a Cessa-

tion of Civil Authority in general, and not of any particular Form of its Administration. So that, *No King*, shall signify *No Government in Israel*. But then, this kind of Government being here put to signify any other, we may reasonably conclude, Either

1. That this, *viz. A Monarchy*, is the best of all the several kinds, the most apt and sufficient for its ends, *Parcere Subjettis, & Debellare Superbos*, for the Terror of Evil Doers, and the Praise of Them that do Well. Or,

2. That, that Government by which God Presided over the Jews, in the Times of *Moses*, and *Joshua*, and the Judges, did more resemble that of a King, than any other sort of Administration, whether of Aristocracy or Democracy. And therefore we may have leave to think, that such a Paternal Government in a Gentle and Well-temper'd *Monarchy*, is most like the Divine *Theocracy* over that Nation, and consequently, where-ever it obtains, in any other, is most Acceptable and Pleasing unto God, as the nearest Approach to the *Pattern in the Mount*, the Primitive Model and Scheme which He contriv'd for his own People : And therefore if any Form of Government be of Divine Right, more than another, such a kind of Monarchy bids fairest for the Character, as being a Copy from the Divine Original. The Rays of Sovereignty did not indeed dazle the Eyes here, so much as in the Tyrannies of the Nations, but they were more Benign, and better suited to the Nature and Genius of a *Free People* : The Circumstances of Majesty were not so Glittering and Gaudy, nor the Power so Absolute and Despotical ; but was sufficiently qualified to answer all the Necessities both of Prince and People. Power is a Wild, and often a Destructive Thing, if it be not fix'd by Law, and sweeten'd by some Allay ; and it becomes not only more Useful and Beneficial, by being somewhat Limited and Circumscrib'd, but also more Durable and Strong, by the Willingness of the People to live under it, where it is their Interest

Interest to Support and Maintain it, as well as Duty to Obey it.

But in this Government of the Jews, there could be no Defect; every Want was supply'd by the Special Providence of the All Wise and Almighty Monarch: For, *when the Lord rais'd them up Judges, the Lord was with the Judge, and deliver'd them out of the Hands of their Enemies all the Days of the Judge*, Chap. II. 18. All the Defect was in the Frowardness of the People, when they would not *hearken to their Judges*, Ver. 17. but went a Whoring after other Gods; either inventing New Gods, or New Ways of Worship, after the fashion of their Neighbours, and at last throwing off, with their Religion, even their Form of Civil Polity, both which God had instituted for them. Thus at one time, as soon as *Moses turn'd his Back*, they cry out to *Aaron, Make us Gods to go before us*; and of their Idols so made, *These be thy Gods, O Israel*; and at another time to *Samuel, for a King to Rule them, after the manner of the Nations*. And these things became matter of Gods high and just Displeasure against them; not that such a Form was simply, and in it self, Unlawful, but because they were given to *Change*, and grew weary both of the Worship which He had prescribed for them, and the Government by which He had deliver'd them at first out of *Egypt*, and carry'd them into *Canaan*, and there frequently Rescu'd them from such as Oppressed and held them in Subjection. The Provocation had been equal, to have desir'd a *Parliament*, or any other Regimen, than that which God Himself had chosen for them; and this appears in the Reason He gives of His Displeasure, to *Samuel*, 1 Sam. VIII. 7, *For in so doing, they have not rejected thee but Me, that I should not Reign over them*.

Having said thus much of the first thing in the Text, viz. the Dissolution of the Civil Government among the Jews, or the Vacancy of the Throne; I need not trouble you with the Enquiry about the Period of Time to which this Observation

vation refers; about which, I cannot find that Agreement on which one may build any Certainty; But certain it is, it could not be after the Times of *Eli* and of *Sampson*, though it is so placed in the History, because we find *Phineas* the Son of *Eleazer* was alive, and Attended the Altar, even after this, Chap. XX. 28. The things therefore here Recorded, and in the following Chapters of this Book, are most probably conceiv'd to happen soon after the Death of *Joshua*, and the Elders that were Contemporary with him; when, as you already heard, they forsook the Lord, and God forsook them; and leaving them without Rule and Government to *do what was right in their own Eyes*, they became an easie Prey to every Tyrant.

But it does not much concern us to know when those Days were, if there were at any Time such Days, in which there was *No King in Israel*: And that there were such, appears by the frequent mention of this Phrase, in several parts of this Book; the Writer whereof seems not so Critical about the Chronology, as the Matters he relates; as not Confining himself so much to the Laws of Method, as the Simplicity of Truth.

And so I come, from considering the Vacancy in their Government, to view the Consequence of such a State.

II. In the Second Point in the Text, which is this, An Universal Debauchery and Depravation of Manners; and who indeed could expect other? Who, that considers how difficult it is, even with Bit and Bridle, to restrain the hard Mouth of the Multitude? It will try the Patience, the Wisdom, the Courage of the most Able and Experienc'd Rulers, even in the best Governments, when they are Arm'd with Power, and bear not the Sword in vain, to quench the Fire of Ambition, and keep down the Passions of Men from boiling over into Lust, and Rage, and Revenge: But when there is none to Guide the Chariot, to Address the Motion, to Check and Arrest the *Furies* that draw it into what

what Precipices will they not run? God help those that fit in the One, or stand in the way of the Other. This State of Things is Deplorable, but 'tis Unavoidable from the Other; Every Man will then do what is right in his own Eyes. Whether this Expression does more fully describe the Sinful or the Miserable Estate of a People, is a question; but that it does both, I think is none.

1. It does import the Sinfulness and Wickedness of a People walking by this Rule? For to do what is right in our own Eyes, is what we daily confess to be our Sin, in *following too much the Devices and Desires of our own Hearts*. It is an Expression that is best measur'd by its contrary, *viz.* To do what is *right in the sight of God*: And therefore we are Commanded, *Numb. XV. 39.* to seek His *Statutes*, and not to go after our own *Hearts*, and our own *Eyes*; and throughout this Book, these Phrases are set in Opposition to each other. The Phrase indeed, consider'd abstractively, is capable of a better sense, to follow the Conduct of Right Reason; but it is plain, that cannot be the Construction here, but the contrary: And I think there is no Expression that gives us a more full and compleat Character of a Person or a People wholly abandoned to a Vicious, Profligate and Sensual Life.

2. It does as necessarily imply the Miserable Estate of any People: For no Man is secure of any thing, though never so dear or valuable. The World is too Narrow for the Ambition and Avarice of Men: They will not graze, like other Beasts, in Common; but every Man would have a Property in all: So that every Man must be perpetually on his guard against his Neighbour; and none can taste or enjoy his Property, for fear of losing it. Every Man then, will be a *Cain* in his Family, an *Abşalon* in the Commonwealth, and an *Ishmael* in the World: *His Hand against every Man, and every Mans Hand against him*. There needs not many words in a matter whereof all Men are convinc'd:

For

For if every Man do what he thinks right, as he pleases, and as he is able, no Man can be long pleas'd, or secure, of his Property, his Liberty, or his Life : Men will grow, without Religion and Law, more Destructive than Beasts without Reason ; and neither of these are suppos'd in this Case, to have any part : Grace here is turn'd into Wantonness, and Religion is used only as a Vizard to deceive ; Reason is turn'd into Craft, and Power abus'd to Oppression ; the Weak become the Prey of the Strong, and the Simple of the Subtile ; Strength is the only Law of Justice ; and he that Suffers, is always in the Wrong : And surely there is not a more miserable Condition in the World, than to live in such a State of *Anarchy*. The most Cruel Tyranny is more Tolerable, by how much it is better to be a Slave to One, than Every Man. Men would rather choose to open a Passage and let out their Lives, than to be in such continual Torment about them : They would rather strip themselves of all Being, if they could, or venture their Condition in another World, than live in this upon such Terms. And yet, with how Pleasing a Speculation does this Commonwealth of *Libertinism* entertain many Imaginations ? They have nothing but Golden Dreams, they already wallow in Wealth, they swim in Pleasure, and are Masters of all they can desire : But alas ! They consider not that Others have the same Fancies and Appetites ; and while every Man grasps at all, none can hold any thing fast.

And that none may think I have represented things in False Colours, Let us put our Eye to the Perspective, and look upon the *Israelites* by the Light of this Text, and we shall behold them all *Chaos*, Deformity, and Confusion, both in their Religious and Civil Affairs.

In the Story here before us, we find *Micah* and his Mother busie and zealous about their Graven and Molten Images, their House of Gods, and their Ephod and Tera-
phim,

phim, making his Son a Priest, who was not of the Tribe of *Levi*. For the *Congregation is Holy*, said *Korah*, and every Man has the Spirit. In the Verse, after the Text, we find a *Levite* Inveigl'd, to give the more Credit, and Countenance to the Idolatry. Tempted by Necessity, as may be conceiv'd by the Salary this Chaplain was contented with, viz. Ten Shekels of Silver *per Annum*, a Suit of Cloaths and his Dyet. So that he, that was but a Servant to the Priest in the Divine Appointment, is Consecrated a Priest, by *Micha's* Order; and by the same Rule, the Priest may become a Bishop. And as *Micha* here, so we find a great part of a Tribe Seduced into the same Sin, *Chap. XVIII. 19*. Thus the Divine Institution will be Despis'd, and all Order inverted in Religion, if every Man may do what is Right in his own Eyes. Every Man will take Honour to himself, without being Call'd as *Aaron*, will Affect the Preheminence, as well as *Diotraphes*, or *Aerius*, will be an Apostle or a Prophet, have a Psalm or a Hymn, a Way and Mode of Worship by himself; and the Unity of Religion shall be Divided and Multiply'd not according to the Number of our Cities or Families, but of Persons. Every Man will Cry *Ignorantia*, and Esteem it a fine thing to be Celebrated for an Author and a Setter forth of new and strange Doctrines, and Applaud themselves for their own happy Discoveries, whereof there are no Footsteps in any of the Traditions or Dotages of the Antients. There is not more Pride, in being First in a Fashion, than being Singular in an Opinion. Such is the Carnality of some Minds. That nothing is more Delightfull to them, than, as the Scripture Phrases it, to *Run a Whoring after their own Inventions*.

Nor were the *Jews*, more Unhappily led by this Liberty into Apostacy from their Religion, than into the Vilest and most Shameful Immoralities; of which the Lewdness of the *Benjamites*, in all its Circumstances and Consequences,

is an Instance, without a Parallel. And the same Reason is assign'd in the conclusion of the History, as sure, there was *no King, but every Man did that which was Right in his own Eyes. Judg. XXI. 25.*

But the Evil does not Rest here, for their Idolatries and Wickedness is Punisht, with Civil Wars among themselves, and Invasion from abroad. The Lust of the *Benjamites*, kindled the Rage of the other Tribes into such a Flame, as almost Consum'd a Tribe of *Israel*. Nor was their Miseries only from a Civil War, but from Foreign Enemies: While they forsook God, who was their Strength, and every one displeas'd Him, by doing what was pleasing to himself, their *divided House could not Stand*, but lay Open to the Ambition of every Powerful Prince, who thought fit to Advance the *Glory of his Arms*, in their Conquest and Destruction. And thus they became a Prey to *Chusban* the *Mesopotamion* and *Eglon* the *Moabite*, and to the many other Lords, who in their Turns Rul'd over them, almost to the Ruine of their Nation. Had not God sent them frequently Signal and Unhop'd for Deliverances.

Having entertain'd your Patience on the Two Particulars, I Propos'd to Discourse of: Give me leave to make a few Inferences from what has been said.

I. And First, this shews an absolute necessity of Civil Power, and a due Execution of Penal Laws, for the well Governing of any People. Since these only can sufficiently curb and restrain this Maxim of the Libertine, which if Pursu'd, must necessarily Destroy all our most Important Interests, of Religion, of Liberty and Property. And all these are necessary. As good no King, as no Law; no Law, as no Execution.

In the Case before us, we find the Want of Civil Government to be the Reason of all the Sins and Miseries of the Jewish Nation. They had the best Religion, then, in the World, and the best Laws for their Use. And *Phinehas* the High

High Priest stood before the Altar, *Chap. XX. 28.* in those days when there was no King.

But though he was a Man famous for his Zeal, as *Abraham* for his Faith, for it was *Imputed to him for Righteousness*, and we cannot imagine he was Idle in that high Employment ; yet neither his Courage nor his Piety could stem the Torrent of Vice and of Idolatry, by the *Power purely Spiritual*.

Where Men have Faith to believe Eternal Rewards and Punishments, the Weapons of the Religious Warfare are indeed Mighty, and of great Efficacy to the pulling down of strong Holds. But even our Saviour could do no mighty Works in some Places, because of Mens Unbelief ; Nor can the Ecclesiastical Conjurers work Miracles of Reformation on all Men, for the same Reason.

But all Men have Sense, though *all Men have not Faith* ; and the Atheist fears Death, that does not fear God ; and looks on that as a Real Evil, though he thinks Hell Torments but a Painted Fire. The Cure therefore of these Evils, of Idolatry, of Atheism, Lewdness, and Profaneness ; which, we are told in *Job*, are *Iniquities to be punished by the Judge* ; is not to be expected from the Spiritual Sword, unless the *Secular Arm* assist it, by delivering them over to Temporal Punishments, as God did to Satan, in the Primitive Discipline, *that they may learn not to blaspheme*.

2. The Mischief of this Principle, of doing every one what is right in his own Eyes, shews the Unreasonableness of those that Contend for an Indefinite Liberty, either in Religious or Civil Matters, under a Stated and Well-Settl'd Government ; for it is the first End of Law and Government to bound and limit such a Liberty. And if Men will not be Confin'd by the Society in which they live, they Cancel the Obligations to which they are suppos'd to have Consented, by Entering into it ; and so endeavour to Sap and Undermine the Foundation on which it stands ; and conse-

quently expose Themselves and Others to the same Inconveniencies and Insecurities they were in: when there was no Government. It is therefore the Interest of Government, and of Those that are Protected by it, joyntly to oppose such a Principle as will destroy both. And when a Government is so Supine and Careless as to suffer Men to Speak, Write, or Act, as they list, it is neither True to it Self, nor Just to Those that Depend upon it; but seems to Conspire with the Enemy to its own Destruction: For as, when there was *No King in Israel*, every Man did what was *right in his own Eyes*; it is as visible if every Man be allowed to do so, there cannot long be a *King in Israel*. Men do not put out their Eyes, when they enter into Society; but they must not walk afterward so much by the *Light Within*, in things Lawful, as by the Light of *Authority*, in things that are to be done; and the Light of *Faith* in the Divine Revelation of the Scriptures, in things that are to be believ'd. And as wise Governments will not Abridge the Liberties of Men, which they have by the Charter of *Nature*, or of *Christians*, which they enjoy, by that of the *Gospel*, beyond what is necessary for the Peace or Good Order of the Community; so neither should Men be Clamorous for being Circumscrib'd in some few things in their own Nature perfectly Indifferent.

3. If the want of Civil Government be so great an Evil, Then it is both the Duty and Interest of any People, who are fallen into such a Circumstance, immediately to apply the proper Remedy, by filling the Vacant Throne by a Free Election, where they have Power so to do; or Peaceable Submission to Those, who have a Right without it. And the Publick Necessity of Affairs, the *Salus Ecclesiæ & Salus Populi*, does both Require and Justifie their doing so, as well for Gods Honour, as their Countrey's Safety.

4. If the want of Civil Government be an occasion of so much Wickedness & Mischief; What great Reason have these Nations

Nations to bless Almighty God, for the Restraint He put upon the Hearts and Hands of Men, when these Kingdoms were left in such a State? Though in some Places the Rabble proceeded to some Excess, yet how little Mischief was done, in comparison of what All reasonably fear'd would have come to pass? When the People were left without Government, and an Army was Disbanded, but not Dis-arm'd, it could be nothing less than the Incontrollable Dominion which God has over the Hearts of Men, that Restrain'd their Spirits, and Chain'd up their Desires, from the utmost Violence, even from Sheathing our Swords in one anothers Bowels. But on the contrary, The Men whose Hands were Mighty, found nothing; while the Multitude, apt enough at other times to run to do Evil, now generally *stand still to see the Salvation of God*; and God chose (not in the Wind, and in the Fire, but) in a soft still Voice to speak Peace to His People.

5. When there was no King in *England*, but the People were left as Sheep without a Shepherd; and those in *Ireland* were Expos'd to the Fury of their Implacable and Inveterate Enemies; when the Ship was left to run a Drift among Rocks and Sands, without a *Pilot*, What reason have we all to Rejoyce, and to Praise God, who has committed us to the Care of such a *Shepherd*, who has put the Helm into such a Hand, as hath hitherto so Steer'd the good Ship between all Difficulties; that we may comfortably hope He will at length carry her into a safe Harbour?

Blessed be God, and blessed be the Name of Their Majesties, This Days Assembly opens to us a Fair Prospect of our being upon the Borders of Better Times than we have yet seen. We are not, as the *Israelites* in the Text, *without a King, nor without a Priest, nor without God in the World*, as some, in so charging us, have lyed unto God. God has Restor'd our Religion and our Monarchy, our Laws and our Law-Makers; *our Judges, as at the First; and our Counsellors,*

as in the Beginning. I hope we shall not be like them, in the other Part, by doing every One, *That which is right in our own Eyes*; seeking our Selves, our Pleasures, and our Gains from our Quarters, our private Interests either of Parties, or Persons, in the prejudice of the Common Stake, and to the Disservice of their Majesties, who have call'd, or the People, who have sent us hither.

I hope again we shall not be like them, as at other Times Murmuring at Gods Providence, because our Deliverance is wrought in Measure, and keeps not up with the Vehemence of our desires; or Repining at such Miscariages, as are inevitably Incident to all great Revolutions: Lest our Ingratitude should become an occasion of our Complaints, and slacken the full Accomplishment of what we long for, with such Impatience. Let us not therefore look only on the Dark side of the Cloud, on our Personal Sufferings, and *fret our selves because of the Evil doers*, but behold the Bright and Amazing Deliverance which God has Wrought for us, and rather than still be Complaining, let us say with good old *Mephibosheth*, when he lost half his Estate, by the Private Accusation of a false Informer, *Yea, let them take all, since my Lord the King is Return'd in Peace.*

And now, what shall we Render unto the Lord, for all the Benefits He has bestow'd? Since the King is Victorious over our Enemies, and we are thereby Restor'd to all those Blessings, of which they had unjustly Depriv'd us; surely the most just and suitable Acknowledgment we can make, is to serve Him, in every Station and Relation, wherein we have receiv'd advantage; in our *Religious*, and *Private*, and *Legislative* Capacities.

I. Let it be right in our Eyes, to serve Their Majesties, in our Religious Stations, by Praying Sincerely and Earnestly, for Them, by whom the *House of Prayer* is Restored to us, That the *God of Israel* would Protect the *King of Israel*, and Establish him, on the Holy Hill of *Sion*, where his Right Hand hath Set him. Let us thus support the hands of our

Deliverer,

Deliverer, while his Armies are Fighting against *Amalek*; that being call'd out of the narrow Scene, where his Progenitors Actions were confin'd for the Deliverance of Oppressed *Provinces*, to Assert the Liberties of *Europe*, against the Great Destroyer, he may ride Prosperously, because of Truth, till he see the *desire of his Soul*.

2. Let it be right in our Eyes, to serve Them with our *Properties*, and *Private Interests*, to enable them to compleat that Deliverance, for which his *Majesty* so freely Ventur'd his Life among us: At least let it appear, that we are, even in our low Estate, *to our Power, yea and beyond our Power, willing of our selves*, to supply the Necessities, of which we have been a great occasion, that our Loyalty and Zeal may *Provoke many*.

3. Let it be right in our Eyes; to serve them, in our *Legislative capacities*, by whom our old Laws are Restor'd to us, and we to the Authority of making new Ones, without any Challenge of such a *Dispensing* Power, as might render both useless. Let us therefore give Consent to, and offer Matter for such Laws, as will secure their Majesties Government, by Promoting the Glory of God, and Love and Goodwill in the People, to their Majesties, and to one another; by suppressing Idolatry and Vice; that by Righteous Laws, and Severe Executions, and Good Examples, all Immorality and Prophaneness may be Punisht, and if possible, put out of Countenance; that so, some Stop may be given to that Flood of Impiety, That is roll'd in upon us, and is become too Strong for Pulpit Reproof, or ordinary Discipline.

It is your Duty, (Most Noble Lords, Most Wise and Worthy Patriots) *in this your Day*, to Consider Things that make for Peace, and to bear your Testimony against the crying Sins of this Generation, which call aloud for *Reformation*, or for *Vengeance*. By frequent Rapines, we have almost lost all Sense of Justice: By the commonness of Swearing and Cursing, all Reverence for God, and Holy Things, Because

Because of these things, our Government is Weakned, and Reproach'd, our Religion Dishonour'd, and the Wrath of God cometh on the Children of Disobedience. You cannot serve their Majesties more acceptably, who are great Examples of Vertue, and scatter Iniquity with their Eyes, nor settle their Thrones more securely, which are best *Establish'd by Righteousness*, nor your own Peace more durably, than by retrieving the Credit of our Worship, and making it a support of Vertue as well as of the Protestant Religion. Then *Righteousness and Peace will Kiss each other, Truth will look down from Heaven, and Glory shall dwell in our Land.*

But if after so great a Deliverance, we shall again Return, or rather Still Continue, in our Follies and our Vanities, in our Filthiness and Intemperance, in our Oppressions and our Plunders, esteeming all right in our own Eyes, whereby the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, or the Pride of Life, is nourished and pamper'd; we vainly trust in Princes, or in Armies, tho' never so Brave and Fortunate: Our boasting of a True Religion is vain also, while we hold it in Unrighteousness; nor will it stay long with us upon such dishonourable Terms. God knows how to Punish, as well as to Deliver: He can give us up to our own Hearts Lusts, to Bite, and Devour, and Consume one another, by Civil Wars; or He can hiss for our Enemies from Abroad, and bring upon us a Chusban, or an Eglon, or stir up the Conquer'd *Philistine*, and Arm the *Canaanite* yet in the Land against us; and the Thorns in our Sides will prove Skins and Daggers at our Hearts, and Fire come out of the Bramble, and destroy the Cedars of *Lebanon*. But I hope better things of you, while I thus speak. Which God of His Infinite Mercy grant for His sake, who speaks better things: *To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory for ever. Amen.*

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